



Frequently Asked Questions:

Severe Weather and Emergency Evacuation Policy

Updated: 11/19/14

Q1: Will state facilities be closed due to severe weather?

A1: It is the State of Iowa's policy that state facilities will not be closed because of severe weather.

Q2: Do I get paid if a state facility is closed due to severe weather?

A2: If the proper authorities determine that state facilities should be closed to the public due to severe weather conditions, affected state employees who do not report to work must use their accrued annual leave (vacation), compensatory time previously accrued, or leave without pay. Employees may also be allowed to work at an alternative location during the closing (with approval from your direct supervisor) or make up any time missed within the same pay week.

Q3: Who determines whether I can work at an alternate location or when I can make up missed time?

A3: You should contact your direct supervisor to request to make up missed time. Your supervisor will approve or deny this request.

Q4: What if I don't have enough vacation or comp time to make up the time I missed because of severe weather?

A4: You would have to take leave without pay or request approval from your supervisor to make up the missed time within the same pay week.

Q5: Do I get paid if a state facility is closed because of an emergency situation (i.e., structural damage, environmental contamination, etc.)?

A5: If state facilities are closed because of an emergency, unless otherwise specified in the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement, employees will remain in pay status. However, those employees who remain in pay status must be available during their regularly scheduled hours. This means each employee must provide his or her employing department with a phone number or contact where he or she can be reached.

Q6: Who determines whether severe weather conditions exist?

A6: The Department of Administrative Services, in conjunction with the Office of the Governor, will make the determination for all state buildings on the Capitol Complex. Outside the Capitol Complex, Department Directors or their designees will make the determination.

Q7: Can I work at home in the event of severe weather so I don't need to use my vacation or comp time?

A7: Check with your supervisor to determine whether your home is a suitable alternate work location.

Q8: What if I reach my place of employment before I find out the facility is closed due to severe weather? May I still work my regular hours that day instead of using vacation or making the hours up later?

A8: Whenever possible, employees who arrive at work in such situations will be allowed to work their normal workday. However, there may be situations that require the facility be completely evacuated.

Q9: What if I had vacation scheduled or if I was on sick leave at the time there is an emergency closing? Do I get credit in my vacation or sick leave bank because other employees will get paid for that time even though they're not working?

A9: No, during emergency closings, employees who are in paid work status are considered to be available to work at any time during their normally scheduled hours. If an employee is on vacation or sick leave or other paid leave status, the employee is not available for work and so the vacation, sick or other leave bank would not be credited.

Q10: How do I find out whether a state facility has closed?

A10: Radio stations WHO and KIOA and television stations WHO, WOI and KCCI will all be notified of closings in Polk County. For areas outside of Polk County, listen to your local media outlets.

Q11: I live in a rural area and sometimes can't make it into work even if state facilities aren't closed. What are my options?

A11: If you reasonably believe travel would be hazardous to your health or safety, you should call your supervisor and inform him or her of the situation. Your supervisor may allow you to work at home or to make up your time later during the pay week, or you will have to use your vacation or comp time, or take leave without pay.

Q12: What if I can't get to work because of severe weather for a couple of consecutive days or the closing occurs toward the end of the pay week and I'm not able to make up the time that I missed?

A12: You will have to use vacation or comp time, or take leave without pay.

Q13: Is it possible to accrue overtime or comp time during the same pay week in which there was an emergency or severe weather closing?

A13: Provisions of the collective bargaining agreements or the DAS-HRE administrative rules regarding overtime and comp time apply as usual.

Q14: What is considered an "emergency" for purposes of the emergency closing policy?

A14: An emergency condition exists when the facility is unsafe for normal business operations due to an environmental hazard, a structural failure, or a mechanical condition that would threaten the health and safety of employees.

Q15: As a temporary employee, do I get paid if I report to work during severe weather?

A15: Temporary employees who report to work during severe weather will be compensated for hours worked.

Q16: What if the collective bargaining agreement that covers my position provides for something different than the Severe Weather and Emergency Evacuation Policy?

A16: Where there are differences between a collective bargaining agreement and this Policy, the collective bargaining agreement prevails for employees covered by the agreement.